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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER	
LOFTIS, JOHNNA RONEE	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
3624	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/643,417	ISSA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	JOHNNA R. LOFTIS	3624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *26 August 2009*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *10/28/09(2) 11/6/09 12/2/09 12/16/09*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is a non-final office action upon examination of application number 10643417. Claims are pending and have been examined on the merits discussed below.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to Applicant's argument I, referring to claim 1, regarding whether Knudson and Swanke teach automatically determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and end date for the next phase, have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

3. Applicant's arguments filed Applicant's argument II have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues Knudson and Swanke do not teach notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next phase of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous phase within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one individuals with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual the next phase can begin. Examiner points out that while the claims are directed to "at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase", there is nothing explicitly recited in the claim that indicates the individual with responsibility is a project leader. Since Swanke teaches notifying the user resource, Examiner upholds the rejection. The user resource is responsible for carrying out the next task in the sequence of tasks. As stated in the rejection Swanke does not teach phases, but

instead teaches tasks of the project. Turnbull is cited showing the common use of phases for project development. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary reference for the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made

5. Claims 1-17 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knudson et al, US 5,765,140, in view of Swanke, US 7,212,987, and Schloss et al, US 5,692,125, further in view of Turnbull et al, US 5,208,765.

As per claim 1, Knudson et al teaches gathering project related information from different sources within the enterprise (column 3, line 20 - column 4, line 46 – the dynamic project management system includes a time entry system (TES), an automated issue management system (AIMS) and a capital budget project tracking analysis system (CBPTA) wherein data is gathered from different sources regarding personnel resource data and funding data); using the gathered

information to create a plurality of reports including a portion of the project related information from a first source and a portion of the project related information from a second source (column 9, lines 29-38 – the TES is configured to prepare reports for tracking financial and project metric, project time schedules as well as funding progress); displaying, in a graphical user interface providing access to a plurality of sub-graphical user interfaces, the gathered information and the reports for assessment (column 6, lines 5-54 – interface modules for viewing project and financial information); analyzing the displayed information and reports to monitor the progress of the project through the project development process (column 7, lines 25-47 – project managers may track and control project process).

Knudson et al teaches assigning project tasks to available employees and contractors (column 2, lines 42-55) and also teaches monitoring project progress (column 7, lines 25-47), but does not explicitly teach determining an end of task of the project development process; notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next task of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous task within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next task in the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual that the next task can begin. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). Swanke also teaches each task is entered along with normal start and end dates as well as any tasks that may gate the start of the task and any task that may be gated by the task (column 5, lines 4-15). Swanke teaches only allowing the start of a gated

task once the prerequisite task is complete, therefore the start and end dates must be updated upon the completion of a prerequisite task (column 5, lines 4-58). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al and Swanke et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach determining a start date and an end date for the next task in the project development process; and automatically updating a scheduled of the project development process with the start and end date for the next task. Schloss et al teaches determining start and end dates of sequential events wherein the schedule is automatically updated with start and end dates for a next event based on condition which occur (column 8, lines 27-46). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the system of Knudson et al and Swanke et al the ability to automatically update a schedule of the project development process with start and end dates as taught by Schloss et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al, Swanke et al and Schloss et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach a phase of the project development

process wherein the phase comprises a segment of the project development process that includes multiple tasks that are grouped together as a related functional process. Turnbull et al teaches a product development system wherein the status of projects are monitored and reported. Turnbull et al also teaches segmentation wherein stages of the project are performed sequentially. Also, each stage is typically selected so that each stage corresponds to one complete phase of the product development status. The sole difference between the primary reference and the claimed subject matter is that the primary reference does not disclose the phases as claimed. The secondary reference discloses phases of project and shows monitoring phases of a project was known in the prior art at the time of the invention. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary reference for the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

As per claim 2, Knudson et al teaches information is gathered from a group of sources comprising: a human resources data system (column 3, lines 31-33 – personnel resource data); a billing system; a fiscal information system; a financial time reporting system (column 4, lines 8-25 – the time entry system); a knowledge/document management system; a project management system (column 4, lines 26-46 – the TES/Plan module provides interface for project management); a process modeling tool; and a tactical project planning and management tool. Knudson et al teaches gathering information from several sources, but doesn't expressly teach the specific systems and tools recited in the claim; however, these differences are only found in the

non-functional descriptive material and are not functionally involved in the steps recited nor do they alter the recited structural elements. The recited method steps would be performed the same regardless of the specific data. Further, the structural elements remain the same regardless of the specific data. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, *see In re Gulack, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); In re Lowry, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); MPEP э 2106.*

As per claim 3, Knudson et al teaches information is gathered from each of a group of sources comprising: a human resources data system (column 3, lines 31-33 – personnel resource data); a billing system; a fiscal information system; a financial time reporting system (column 4, lines 8-25 – the time entry system); a knowledge/document management system; a project management system (column 4, lines 26-46 – the TES/Plan module provides interface for project management); a process modeling tool; and a tactical project planning and management tool. Knudson et al teaches gathering information from several sources, but doesn't expressly teach the specific systems and tools recited in the claim; however, these differences are only found in the non-functional descriptive material and are not functionally involved in the steps recited nor do they alter the recited structural elements. The recited method steps would be performed the same regardless of the specific data. Further, the structural elements remain the same regardless of the specific data. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, *see In re Gulack, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); In re Lowry, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); MPEP э 2106.*

As per claim 4, Knudson et al teaches reports are selected from the actual costs of the project (column 9, lines 30-37 – funding progress); the actual time spent on a project (column 9,

lines 30-37 – tracking project time scheduled progress); and quality metrics related to the actual costs and time of a project compared to the estimated costs and time (column 2, lines 56-63 – project managers can periodically track and control project progress in accordance with the previously defined time schedules and associated funding).

As per claim 5, Knudson et al teaches reports each of a group of reports comprising: the actual costs of a project (column 9, lines 30-37 – funding progress); the actual time spent on a project (column 9, lines 30-37 – tracking project time scheduled progress); and quality metrics related to the actual costs and time of a project compared to the estimated costs and time (column 2, lines 56-63 – project managers can periodically track and control project progress in accordance with the previously defined time schedules and associated funding).

As per claim 6, Knudson et al teaches monitoring of the progress is performed through interaction with a graphical user interface and are selected from a group of steps comprising: approving the concept to move from one phase of the project development process to the next phase; providing an estimate of the cost of a change to the scope of a project; viewing the status of a project (column 7, lines 1-6); viewing a timeline of the work done on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing a timeline of the work remaining on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing the human resources assigned to a project (column 3, lines 30-35 – personnel resource data); viewing the large-scale initiatives to which the project is related; automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur; and calculating a score reflecting the worthiness of a project-related concept.

As per claim 7, Knudson et al teaches monitoring of the progress is performed through interaction with a graphical user interface and include each of a group of steps comprising:

approving the concept to move from one phase of the project development process to the next phase; providing an estimate of the cost of a change to the scope of a project; viewing the status of a project (column 7, lines 1-6); viewing a timeline of the work done on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing a timeline of the work remaining on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing the human resources assigned to a project (column 3, lines 30-35 – personnel resource data); viewing the large-scale initiatives to which the project is related; automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur; and calculating a score reflecting the worthiness of a project-related concept.

As per claim 8, Knudson et al teaches characterizing the type of work to be done within a project (column 6, lines 4-14 – TES/Plan interface module for creating tasks and assigning); categorizing the type of work based on the characterization (column 6, lines 4-14 – TES/Plan interface module for creating tasks and assigning); routing the work to an appropriate organization based on the categorization; displaying steps in the project development process in a set of computer based graphical user interfaces all of which can be accessed via one or more electronic links from a single graphical user interface (column 6, lines 4-14 – the assignments table resides in a common or master database and can be accessed by each server and lists assigned tasks for the projects); and performing actions in the project development process through interactions with the graphical user interfaces (column 6, lines 25-30 – the project file is update with the TEX/Plan module).

Knudson et al teaches assigning project tasks to available employees and contractors (column 2, lines 42-55) and also teaches monitoring project progress (column 7, lines 25-47), but does not explicitly teach determining an end of phase of the project development process;

notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next phase of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous phase within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). Swanke also teaches each task is entered along with normal start and end dates as well as any tasks that may gate the start of the task and any task that may be gated by the task (column 5, lines 4-15). Swanke teaches only allowing the start of a gated task once the prerequisite task is complete, therefore the start and end dates must be updated upon the completion of a prerequisite task (column 5, lines 4-58). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al and Swanke et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach determining a start date and an end date for the next task in the project development process; and automatically updating a scheduled of the project development process with the start and end date for the next task. Schloss et al teaches determining start and end dates of sequential events wherein the schedule is automatically

updated with start and end dates for a next event based on condition which occur (column 8, lines 27-46). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the system of Knudson et al and Swanke et al the ability to automatically update a schedule of the project development process with start and end dates as taught by Schloss et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al, Swanke et al and Schloss et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach a phase of the project development process wherein the phase comprises a segment of the project development process that includes multiple tasks that are grouped together as a related functional process. Turnbull et al teaches a product development system wherein the status of projects are monitored and reported. Turnbull et al also teaches segmentation wherein stages of the project are performed sequentially. Also, each stage is typically selected so that each stage corresponds to one complete phase of the product development status. The sole difference between the primary reference and the claimed subject matter is that the primary reference does not disclose the phases as claimed. The secondary reference discloses phases of project and shows monitoring phases of a project was known in the prior art at the time of the invention. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary

reference for the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

As per claim 9, Knudson et al teaches actions are selected from a group of actions comprising: approving the concept to move from one phase of the project development process to the next phase; providing an estimate of the cost of a change to the scope of a project; viewing the status of a project (column 7, lines 1-6); viewing a timeline of the work done on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing a timeline of the work remaining on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing the human resources assigned to a project (column 3, lines 30-35 – personnel resource data); viewing the large-scale initiatives to which the project is related; calculating a score reflecting the worthiness of a project-related concept; creating reports related to the project development process; and viewing the reports (column 9, lines 29-38 – the TES is configured to prepare reports for tracking financial and project metric, project time schedules as well as funding progress).

As per claim 10, Knudson et al teaches the limitations according to claim 9 above, but does not explicitly teach upon the completion of a phase within the project development process, automatically sending a message to at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process informing the individual that the next phase can begin; and automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification

that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

As per claim 11, Knudson et al teaches approving the concept to move from one phase of the project development process to the next phase; providing an estimate of the cost of a change to the scope of a project; viewing the status of a project (column 7, lines 1-6); viewing a timeline of the work done on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing a timeline of the work remaining on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing the human resources assigned to a project (column 3, lines 30-35 – personnel resource data); viewing the large-scale initiatives to which the project is related; calculating a score reflecting the worthiness of a project-related concept; creating reports related to the project development process; and viewing the reports (column 9, lines 29-38 – the TES is configured to prepare reports for tracking financial and project metric, project time schedules as well as funding progress).

As per claim 12, Knudson et al teaches the limitations according to claim 11 above, but does not explicitly teach upon the completion of a phase within the project development process, automatically sending a message to at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process informing the individual that the next phase can begin; and automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of

additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

As per claim 13, Knudson et al teaches a set of computer-based graphical user interfaces all of which can be accessed, via one or more links, from a single graphical user interface, each of which displays project-related information and each of which allows actions in the management of the progress of a project to be performed through interaction with the graphical user interface (column 6, lines 4-14 – the assignments table resides in a common or master database and can be accessed by each server and lists assigned tasks for the projects; column 6, lines 25-30 – the project file is update with the TEX/Plan module).

Knudson et al teaches assigning project tasks to available employees and contractors (column 2, lines 42-55) and also teaches monitoring project progress (column 7, lines 25-47), but does not explicitly teach determining an end of phase of the project development process; notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next phase of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous phase within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the

automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). Swanke also teaches each task is entered along with normal start and end dates as well as any tasks that may gate the start of the task and any task that may be gated by the task (column 5, lines 4-15). Swanke teaches only allowing the start of a gated task once the prerequisite task is complete, therefore the start and end dates must be updated upon the completion of a prerequisite task (column 5, lines 4-58). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al and Swanke et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach determining a start date and an end date for the next task in the project development process; and automatically updating a scheduled of the project development process with the start and end date for the next task. Schloss et al teaches determining start and end dates of sequential events wherein the schedule is automatically updated with start and end dates for a next event based on condition which occur (column 8, lines 27-46). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the system of Knudson et al and Swanke et al the ability to automatically update a schedule of the project development process with start and end dates as taught by Schloss et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately,

and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al, Swanke et al and Schloss et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach a phase of the project development process wherein the phase comprises a segment of the project development process that includes multiple tasks that are grouped together as a related functional process. Turnbull et al teaches a product development system wherein the status of projects are monitored and reported. Turnbull et al also teaches segmentation wherein stages of the project are performed sequentially. Also, each stage is typically selected so that each stage corresponds to one complete phase of the product development status. The sole difference between the primary reference and the claimed subject matter is that the primary reference does not disclose the phases as claimed. The secondary reference discloses phases of project and shows monitoring phases of a project was known in the prior art at the time of the invention. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary reference for the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

As per claim 14, Knudson et al teaches approving the concept to move from one task of the project development process to the next task; providing an estimate of the cost of a change to the scope of a project; viewing the status of a project (column 7, lines 1-6); viewing a timeline of the work done on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing a

timeline of the work remaining on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing the human resources assigned to a project (column 3, lines 30-35 – personnel resource data); viewing the large-scale initiatives to which the project is related; calculating a score reflecting the worthiness of a project-related concept; creating reports related to the project development process; and viewing the reports (column 9, lines 29-38 – the TES is configured to prepare reports for tracking financial and project metric, project time schedules as well as funding progress).

Knudson et al and Swanke et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach a phase of the project development process wherein the phase comprises a segment of the project development process that includes multiple tasks that are grouped together as a related functional process. Turnbull et al teaches a product development system wherein the status of projects are monitored and reported. Turnbull et al also teaches segmentation wherein stages of the project are performed sequentially. Also, each stage is typically selected so that each stage corresponds to one complete phase of the product development status. The sole difference between the primary reference and the claimed subject matter is that the primary reference does not disclose the phases as claimed. The secondary reference discloses phases of project and shows monitoring phases of a project was known in the prior art at the time of the invention. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary reference for

the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

As per claim 15, Knudson et al teaches the limitations according to claim 14 above, but does not explicitly teach upon the completion of a phase within the project development process, automatically sending a message to at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process informing the individual that the next phase can begin; and automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al and Swanke et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach a phase of the project development process wherein the phase comprises a segment of the project development process that includes multiple tasks that are grouped together as a related functional process. Turnbull et al teaches a product development system wherein the status of projects are monitored and reported. Turnbull et al also teaches segmentation wherein stages of the project are performed sequentially. Also, each stage is typically selected so that each stage corresponds to one complete phase of the product

development status. The sole difference between the primary reference and the claimed subject matter is that the primary reference does not disclose the phases as claimed. The secondary reference discloses phases of project and shows monitoring phases of a project was known in the prior art at the time of the invention. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary reference for the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

As per claim 16, Knudson et al teaches approving the concept to move from one task of the project development process to the next task; providing an estimate of the cost of a change to the scope of a project; viewing the status of a project (column 7, lines 1-6); viewing a timeline of the work done on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing a timeline of the work remaining on a project (column 7, lines 1-6 – estimated time to completion); viewing the human resources assigned to a project (column 3, lines 30-35 – personnel resource data); viewing the large-scale initiatives to which the project is related; calculating a score reflecting the worthiness of a project-related concept; creating reports related to the project development process; and viewing the reports (column 9, lines 29-38 – the TES is configured to prepare reports for tracking financial and project metric, project time schedules as well as funding progress).

The combination of Knudson et al and Swanke et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach a phase of the project development process

wherein the phase comprises a segment of the project development process that includes multiple tasks that are grouped together as a related functional process. Turnbull et al teaches a product development system wherein the status of projects are monitored and reported. Turnbull et al also teaches segmentation wherein stages of the project are performed sequentially. Also, each stage is typically selected so that each stage corresponds to one complete phase of the product development status. The sole difference between the primary reference and the claimed subject matter is that the primary reference does not disclose the phases as claimed. The secondary reference discloses phases of project and shows monitoring phases of a project was known in the prior art at the time of the invention. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary reference for the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

As per claim 17, Knudson et al teaches the limitations according to claim 16 above, but does not explicitly teach upon the completion of a phase within the project development process, automatically sending a message to at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process informing the individual that the next phase can begin; and automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). It would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

The combination of Knudson et al and Swanke et al teaches all of the above with respect to tasks of a project but do not explicitly teach a phase of the project development process wherein the phase comprises a segment of the project development process that includes multiple tasks that are grouped together as a related functional process. Turnbull et al teaches a product development system wherein the status of projects are monitored and reported. Turnbull et al also teaches segmentation wherein stages of the project are performed sequentially. Also, each stage is typically selected so that each stage corresponds to one complete phase of the product development status. The sole difference between the primary reference and the claimed subject matter is that the primary reference does not disclose the phases as claimed. The secondary reference discloses phases of project and shows monitoring phases of a project was known in the prior art at the time of the invention. Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate reference, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself – that is in the substitution of the project phases of the secondary reference for the individual tasks of the primary reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOHNNA R. LOFTIS whose telephone number is (571)272-6736. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brad Bayat can be reached on 571-272-6704. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/Johnna R Loftis/
Examiner, Art Unit 3624